

REMARKS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections and rejections set forth in the above-mentioned Official Action in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3, 5-11 and 13-27 now pending in the application, with Claims 1, 7, 10, 17, 20, 23 and 27 being independent. Claims 4 and 12 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. Claims 1-3, 5-11 and 13-26 have been amended and Claim 27 is newly presented herein.

The drawings were objected to as allegedly not showing the feature recited in Claims 4 and 12. Without conceding the propriety of this objection, Claims 4 and 12 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to the drawings are requested.

Claims 3, 4, 11 and 12 were objected to for minor informalities. As noted above, Claims 4 and 12 have been cancelled. Further, Claims 3 and 11 have been amended herein in the manner suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections to those claims are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. Without conceding the propriety of this rejection, Applicant has reworded the language questioned by the Examiner. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 112, second paragraph, rejection are also requested.

Claims 1, 2, 4-10, 12-16 and 20-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated U.S. Patent No. 6,769,683 (Hiramatsu) and under § 102(f) as allegedly being invented by another based on the teachings of Hiramatsu. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Hiramatsu is directed to an image recording apparatus including a conveying roller 14 and a pinch roller 21. In the embodiment of Figure 3, conveying roller 14 is rotatably supported by a bearing 20, which supports the roller's shaft portion 14a. Shaft portion 14a is stabilized to be in tangential contact with two bearing arc portions 20a of bearing 20 at contact lines 20c. Other embodiment of the bearing are also described.

However, the various embodiments of Hiramatsu are not described as having a bearing member of the same design as the embodiments of the present invention. Referring to Applicants' Figures 2-4, for example, the interrelationship between the various vectors of forces and contact angles is described. It is respectfully submitted that Hiramatsu does not disclose or suggest the various supporting by the conveyance roller and/or chassis recited in the wherein clauses of the independent claims merely because Hiramatsu depicts a bearing with tangential contact lines. Nor would such features be inherent by the teachings of Hiramatsu.

For example, Hiramatsu fails to disclose or suggest that the bearing (or chassis) supports the conveyance roller (or bearing) so as to locate a direction perpendicular to a line coupling the two contact portions within a range of vector directions of various exertion forces exerted on the bearing when the conveyance roller is stopped and when the conveyance roller is rotating, as is recited in independent Claims 1, 7 and 10.

Nor does Hiramatsu disclose or suggest that a direction perpendicular to a line coupling two contact portions is located, in an arbitrary cross-section perpendicular to the axial direction of the conveyance roller, to correspond with the combined vector of an exerting force at a state of stopping and at an exerting force at a state of starting the conveyance roller, as is recited in independent Claim 27. Nor does Hiramatsu disclose or suggest that a direction perpendicular to a line coupling the two contact portions is located, in arbitrary cross-section perpendicular to the axial direction of the conveyance roller (or bearing), within a range of vector directions of varying exertion forces exerted on the bearing when the conveyance roller is stopped and when the conveyance roller is rotating, as is recited in independent Claims 17, 20 and 23.

Thus, Hiramatsu fails to disclose or suggest important features of the present invention recited in independent claims.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 102 rejections are respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the present invention is patentably defined by independent Claims 1, 7, 10, 17, 20, 23 and 27. Dependent Claims 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13-16, 18, 19, 21, 22 and 24-26 are also allowable, in their own right, for defining features of the present invention in addition to those recited in their respective independent claims. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is requested.

Applicant submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the objections and rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowability are requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Mark A. Williamson', written over a horizontal line.

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